

HONORING THE SERVICE OF
MICHAEL HARRIS

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 17, 2023

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of former Mayor of Pleasant Hill Michael Harris as he retires after more than 30 years of service to Contra Costa County.

Throughout his career, Michael has shown his steadfast commitment to bettering the lives of Contra Costans and improving our community. He began his career in public service with the Moraga Planning Commission, later going on to serve 4 years on the Moraga Town Council. When Michael moved to Pleasant Hill with his family, he used his skills to serve his new hometown. He was appointed to the Pleasant Hill Planning Commission in 1999 and was a key player in the creation of downtown Pleasant Hill. Thanks to Michael's leadership, the city has grown significantly, allowing businesses to thrive, and fostering a greater sense of community in Pleasant Hill. Michael also spearheaded the city's Community Service Day, allowing residents to unite in an effort to better the community.

Further, Michael has worked tirelessly to support our community's youth, establishing the Pleasant Hill Education Initiative to expand educational opportunities in the city and regularly volunteering at local schools. He also served on the Contra Costa County Managed Care Commission, managing the county's healthcare system and advocating for a reliable and effective healthcare system for all Contra Costans. Michael's work has had a profound impact on both Pleasant Hill and the county at large.

Outside of his work in government, Michael is also an esteemed optometrist and devoted educator. He serves as Clinical Professor Emeritus and Senior Lecturer Emeritus at the UC Berkeley School of Optometry. Michael has been a part of UC Berkeley's faculty for over 50 years, training thousands of optometrists and preparing them to enter the field. He has also authored over 200 scientific papers and published 4 books on this subject. Through his professional experience, Michael is able to offer a unique perspective and provide a clear vision of leadership for our community.

Please join me in congratulating Michael Harris on his well-deserved retirement after more than 3 decades of outstanding public service to Contra Costa.

RECOGNIZING TEMPLE BETH EL

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 17, 2023

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work of Temple Beth El, a religious organization in Bakersfield, as they celebrate their 75th anniversary.

Founded in 1947, Temple Beth El was created to help Central Valley residents embrace

a lifetime of Jewish fulfillment—through faith, culture, and community. That same year, they inaugurated their first Rabbi and installed a religious school for children. Since its founding, Temple Beth El has been an inclusive and welcoming space for people of all backgrounds to explore and maintain their spiritual and emotional connection to Judaism.

Temple Beth El is a place where all are welcomed—whether they were born Jewish or found Judaism later in life. The teachings provided can open the door to a lifetime of Jewish fulfillment and commitment. The members of Temple Beth El have dedicated their lives to promoting Jewish ideas and beliefs through education and community. In December 2007, Temple Beth El opened its Torah Learning Center, which offered 8 new classrooms to teach students about Judaism and Jewish heritage. In addition to its wide range of classes, the Temple Beth El Beginning Learning Center serves as a preschool and daycare for its members and their children.

For decades, Temple Beth El has played a vital role in the Jewish community throughout the Central Valley, particularly in Bakersfield. Through their religious services and education centers, they have created a safe environment for the Bakersfield Jewish community to come together.

I ask all of my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring Temple Beth El as it celebrates its 75-year anniversary.

COMMENDING JANNA LOPEZ FOR
HER OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO
THE COMMUNITY DURING THE
HERMIT'S PEAK/CALF CANYON
WILDFIRE

HON. TERESA LEGER FERNANDEZ

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 17, 2023

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Janna Lopez from Las Vegas, New Mexico. The Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire started on April 6, 2022, when a U.S. Forest Service prescribed burn got out of control. It burned 341,735 acres between April and late August in the southern Sangre de Cristo Mountains in San Miguel, Mora, and Taos counties. It was the largest wildfire in New Mexico history.

Janna immediately stepped up to help the residents of Mora and San Miguel Counties. In collaboration with the community, she rapidly set up a shelter where her team, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, provided food and shelter to hundreds of displaced residents for over 10 months.

Janna's commitment to serving others is inspiring. Her work to bring people and organizations together is the embodiment of community. Neighbors Helping Neighbors serves San Miguel, Mora, and Colfax counties and beyond. The team has donated hundreds of thousands of dollars directly and in kind to their neighbors. During the initial phases of the wildfire response, Janna also coordinated donations from local businesses, national relief organizations, and established a co-located

Disaster Relief Center with FEMA. Her passion for serving others has also led to her service as a Committee Chair for the Mora San Miguel Hermit's Peak Calf Canyon Long Term Recovery Group.

Janna is an exemplary model of how we can help one another as fellow citizens of this great Nation. We honor her and the countless New Mexicans, businesses, non-profits, and organizations who also donated their time, effort, and money to help New Mexico recover during this extremely difficult time. When President Biden visited New Mexico on June 11, 2022, he said, "We have a responsibility to help this state recover, to help the families who have been here for centuries in beautiful northern New Mexico villages who can't go home and whose livelihoods have been fundamentally changed."

Empowered by the work and stories of Janna and so many Nuevo Mexicanos, I introduced the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire Assistance Act. Congress passed and President Biden signed into law this legislation and \$3.95 billion in relief to rightfully compensate the fire's survivors and help them recover. Uniting to work toward a common goal is what America represents. Help is finally here. The hardworking people in New Mexico and across the country have shown us what true community looks like. Janna is one of those community heroes. I thank her for her selflessness and dedication to service.

HONORING DR. SANDRA NIXON
TYNES AS A DISTINGUISHED
LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA
FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 17, 2023

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Sandra Nixon Tynes, an educator and ordained Christian Evangelist, co-founded the Welcome Table Ministries along with her husband Deacon Carlton A. Tynes, a Korean War veteran and 30-year civil servant. They had a joint vision to establish a ministry dedicated to serving others. Although Deacon Tynes transitioned in December of 2019, Welcome Table Ministries continues its good work under co-founder Dr. Sandra Nixon Tynes with an ardent, unwavering mandate to serve the hopeless, the hungry, the homeless, and the helpless.

Since its inception, Welcome Table Ministries has served over 29,000 hot nutritious home-cooked meals and provided confidential counseling, free resumes, free tutoring in English language arts, special holiday treats/gifts, emergency groceries, and monetary crisis assistance. Dr. Tynes also provides assistance with religious services. Welcome Table Ministries has touched the lives of many in countless strives to fulfill its mission to "share the sweet love of Jesus Christ one hot meal and one act of kindness at a time." They have been doing so for over 23 years.

Dr. Tynes has been recognized by the City of Kissimmee with a proclamation for the ministry, service, and partnership with other community organizations in Osceola County.